

What is the purpose of Cranes Club?

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Beloved Fellow Cranes! It is a tremendous joy and honor for me to have this opportunity to greet you all here today. I am profoundly grateful that each and every one of you has gathered for this special Cranes Club meeting, where we will share together and discuss our plans and goals for 2016.

First of all, I want to express my deep appreciation to True Parents, for their lives of love and sacrifice for all of us. Also, I want to share my boundless gratitude to True Mother, who is carrying the heavy burden of leadership of our worldwide movement. We are very proud of her, and I know we all want to do our best to support her, doing the best we can, despite our limitations.

In developing the Cranes Club with the guidance and blessing of True Mother, many people asked me, what is its purpose? Frankly, in the beginning, the project was met with some skepticism and doubt. However, as we launched Cranes Club in the United States, Europe and Korea in 2015, we received a lot of feedback and recommendations.

We received much encouragement and inspiration, but we also received many constructive suggestions for improvement. Many wanted to see Cranes Club become an organization that was very interactive, focusing on dialogue, connecting, and networking.

The purpose of Cranes Club

Overall, I think there are several key motivations for starting Cranes Club, based on my personal experience, especially as a second-generation member. First of all, on a very personal level, growing up in the second generation, I experienced numerous workshops, Sunday school programs and summer camps, up until the time of the blessing. The church did a great job in educating and supporting me as a young person by sponsoring many of these workshops and camps.

The deep friendships that I formed and our youthful camaraderie as we grew up together as an extended family left an indelible mark in my heart. Also, in many respects, it was only others in the second generation who could really understand the numerous challenges, difficulties and issues that we in the second generation had to deal with. This time spent together, learning that we all shared a precious common background and history, was a great source of inspiration that both strengthened our relationships to God and to one another. As we grew to know and understand one another, we could also support each other. But, over the last twenty years, I began to notice that for many of us, especially after receiving the blessing, and for very understandable reasons, priorities began to change gradually.

The practical and very necessary responsibilities of trying to raise and support a family became the number one priority for many of my peers. Also, given that the movement was still developing and growing in terms of human resources, many in the second generation even had to take on the added responsibility of trying to provide for and support their parents as well.

So, again, very understandably, it is easy for people to drift apart because priorities have changed. Under such circumstances, it is easy to lose our connections to one another. I do not think this situation is unique to our movement. It is a part of the natural life cycle, and naturally happens in many organizations or groups; for example, among university students after they graduate. This is why universities form alumni associations.

I know that the church is very much focused on investing in our youth. Still, in the back of my mind, I am very concerned that if we do not provide a forum for meaningful interaction and a way to reconnect -- especially among the older second-generation members after they have received the blessing -- like a cup with a hole in the bottom, water will leak out, even as we keep trying to fill it.

Like HARP, CARP or the Youth Federation, which try to connect high school or college students, I hope that the Cranes Club can inspire us to build stronger connections with one another. We can strengthen our bonds of friendship, supporting each other, and building a community, especially among the older second-generation members of the movement, many of whom are working professionals.



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About a month ago, I was in New York City and had an opportunity to meet an older second-generation Unificationist "hyung," whom I had not seen for probably about twenty years. As I greeted him, thinking about all the unique challenges and difficulties he must have faced and overcome, and feeling very proud of all his accomplishments, despite the difficulties he had faced, I was moved to greet him with a big hug.

I felt sincere joy as we reconnected, especially after such a long time. Cranes Club, from an external point of view, can provide a great professional network among those in the second generation. In this way, we can mentor younger brothers and sisters, engage in voluntarism and philanthropy, and support one another professionally.

From an internal point of view, Cranes Club provides a great opportunity for us to rekindle, reconnect with and maintain lost connections with all those in our extended and international family -- that worldwide family that True Parents' and our first generation elders have built with their vision, and their blood, sweat, and tears. Cranes Club can help all of us find strength through knowing that we share a precious common history and that we have each other, no matter what difficulties we may face. Cranes Club can help us continue to nurture and develop our precious community, as we -- those in the second generation -- grow older and wiser. I sincerely applaud each and every one who has come here today. I deeply respect your accomplishments in life, for I know that these accomplishments were not won easily. I admire you all the more, knowing of the many difficulties and challenges you must have had to deal with in your lives. In conclusion, and with a spirit of family, with a spirit of reunion, and a spirit of reconnecting with joy, love, care and support, I encourage you to be actively involved in Cranes Club. Let us work together to develop and expand Cranes Club, for the sake of our movement, for the sake of the world, which needs what we have to offer, especially when we come together in harmony and cooperation.

Thank you very much for all your support and investment in Cranes Club. May Heavenly Parent and True Parents bless each one of you and your precious families always.